

SICK/TIRED

MRR: Please introduce your band. How did your band form?

Sick/Tired formed back in 2008 and at the time we were all friends living in DeKalb, IL. Since then, I have moved to Chicago and as of last year (before we toured the East Coast) we added Adam J from Winters in Osaka as our new vocalist who is also from Chicago. Sometimes it can be a drag having half the band living an hour apart, but it works out fine for us.

MRR: How did Belo, your old singer, come to part ways with the band?

That was kind of bizarre. Right before we had two new records coming out and a small tour planned, he decided he wanted to quit. He never really gave too much of a reason other than he "wasn't feelin' it anymore." I think he was (and still is) very depressed about things in his life, but he never really opened up to us about it.

MRR: Where do you draw your influences/what motivates you musically as a band.

I have always been way more into hardcore and punk than grind or powerviolence. The other guys are really into grindcore and death metal. This sort of creates a balance in our songwriting because when songs start leaning toward the metal side of things, I try and pull it back over to the hardcore side. Ultimately we play grind I guess, but it is heavily influenced by hardcore/punk. When we first started out Gonzo (our guitarist) did 90% of the songwriting. Those are most of the songs that went onto our LP on To Live A Lie. Now it is much more collaborative and all of us have been writing songs and I'm really stoked on how we have improved over the years.

MRR: How was touring out to the East Coast? How was touring over to Raleigh to play with Despise You? Any mishaps along the way?

Our East Coast trip last year was really great. We all wish it could've been longer, but work and life just wouldn't permit it. It was great to be able to get out because typically we are only able to play shows in the Midwest. We had some equipment problems in Philly that sort of killed the energy, so I really want to play there again someday and redeem ourselves. We didn't really have any mishaps though. The Leathershop in Lima, OH was the most fun I've had playing a show in a long time. Those guys are fucking awesome. Raleigh was also really good. I had never seen Despise You, so it was sick to open for such a legendary band. Phil Vera is a warrior!

MRR: How was playing with Nasum this year?

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Nasum gig was really fun.

It was rad to watch them doing a sound check with no one else in the venue. Very powerful. I think it was the firstnight of their US tour so they were all fired up and full of energy. Sadly, Dropdead cancelled and honestly they were the main band I wanted to play with that night.

MRR: What releases do you have out or what do you have planned to release soon?

At this point, our demo and LP are long sold out. We currently have two "new" 7 inches that came out at the beginning of 2012 and also a split 7" with OxBaker. All three are still available from the labels (Cowabunga, PRGNT/Idoneum Bello, and Schizophrenic records). Nick from Cowabunga will be releasing our second LP. This will be the first recording with Adam J on vocals. We are recording the new LP in July and hopefully it will be out before the end of 2012. A lot of the songs have been collaborated on by all four of us, which is a really good feeling. I'm really stoked to hear the final product.

MRR: It's great to hear that the band is maturing and changing. Do you feel the new LP is a big change from the first full length? I'm personally excited to hear the band with the added noise.

People are going to like us way more for sure because we are much better now. I think it's a big change because all of us are more involved in the song writing. Musically things are much heavier and a lot of that is because of Adam J's vocal style. We also bring the mince a little bit on this new LP, so there's that. I think our first LP suffered from poor production. We recorded with a friend of mine that knows what he is doing, but wasn't into the style of music we play. When we recorded for our 7 inches that came out earlier this year, we went with someone that knew exactly what we should sound like and it turned out so much better. You can totally hear the difference.

Sick/Tired is one tough band to put a finger on. They smash together grindcore, hardcore punk, and powerviolence elements into a pleasing cacophony of utter break-neck mayhem. Ex members of MK-Ultra and Weekend Nachos gives you an idea of the direction their music takes. I had the extreme pleasure of seeing them live in my hometown and I later caught up with Kirk Syrek of the band to get deeper insight into his band, their new direction/writing style and what is in store for the future.

Interview by Will Butler, photos by Carmelo Espanola



MRR: How many terrible bands with similar names like Sick & Tired, Sick'n'Tired have you come across or been mistaken for?

I have not come across any. There are people that say the "and" which freaks me out so I correct them when I can. Looking back I guess it wasn't the best name choice. I really like the "Sick/Tired" though because it looks rad.

MRR: Tell me what DIY means to you.

Not being false. Doing what you want on your own terms without relying on others to get things done. Taking some chances. Ignoring the trends and what others are doing and making your own way. As far as bands go, it seems like everyone wants everything handed to them now. MP3 only releases are worthless. Press a record or put out a goddamn tape. Record a demo first and release it yourself before you record your album. *Fuck Kickstarter*. Why are you pestering your friends and family into releasing your album for you? Nobody owes you shit. If you can't afford to record your music and no label is offering to put it out, it's a good sign you are not ready yet. That doesn't mean give up. I just mean get your shit together first. "Musician" is not a fucking job no matter what you might think. Make your living some other way and quit milking other people or expecting handouts.

MRR: What are shows like in your area? Any new bands around that need to be heard?

Shows in Chicago can be hit or miss, but typically they are usually pretty good. A touring band can do really well here if the person running the show puts in the work. The problem is the scene is so huge and there are so many shows all the time that everything is really divided. Unlike small towns where shows are rare and *all* the kids come out to see bands, no matter what style they like, Chicago suffers from groups of kids that will not go see grind/power violence bands and only go to punk shows, indie shows and vice versa. There are so many shows, that everyone can basically pick and choose what they want to go see. Then you'll get a band like the Ropes that everyone likes and 200 kids will show up. New bands are always popping up. I'd say a good new band to check out is Consent. They are doing a split 7 inch with Sea of Shit. Cold Lovers is a good new band. There is also Violent End, who will play their first show in a few weeks (members of Raw Nerve, Manipulation and Vile Gash). Sadly a lot of the underground venues that have been hosting shows the last few years have started to get shut down recently which is unfortunate.

MRR: Tell me a little about old bands in the area. Sea of Shit is a killer band!

It was sad to see Raw Nerve go. Their shows were always a blast and they were great to watch. Also, if a touring band was coming through and Raw Nerve was on the bill, you knew there would be



a good turnout. They will really be missed, but always remembered. Sea of Shit had a near break up recently. Their guitarist decided his heart was no longer in it and he quit. Luckily they found a replacement pretty quickly and decided to keep the band going. They just recorded a few new songs for a split 7 inch with Consent.

MRR: Sick/Tired's artwork is over the top. Tell us some about Mike Miller and his connection to your band.

Mike is a great artist and friend. I've only known him a few years, but the other guys have been friends with him for years. Adam our drummer has been playing music with him for a long time and that is how the connection was made. He is a fantastic artist. After we had him design our first three releases, we decided to go in a more stripped down and raw direction and that's why we switched to Dan Rossiter. We needed a change.

MRR: What are your day jobs?

We are all an athlete, a geek, a basket case, a princess and a criminal.

MRR: Do any of you play in any other bands? Any embarrassing past bands you'd like to mention? Tell me some about MK-Ultra!

I'll try and be as brief as I can here. Our drummer Adam T was in Weekend Nachos. He played drums on the *Torture* 7 inch, which is their best release. He's also been doing Inverted for over ten years, which is a raw punk solo project he does with a drum machine, as well as a noise/thrash band called MZRCDXVL. Adam J is behind Winters in Osaka and Paucities. He is also doing a new grind/noise project with Dan Lactose from Spazz, Dorian from Phobia and Jay from Agoraphobic Nosebleed. Gonzo is currently in a grind band called Minimum Wage Assassins and he is also in an old style country/bluegrass band called the Charred

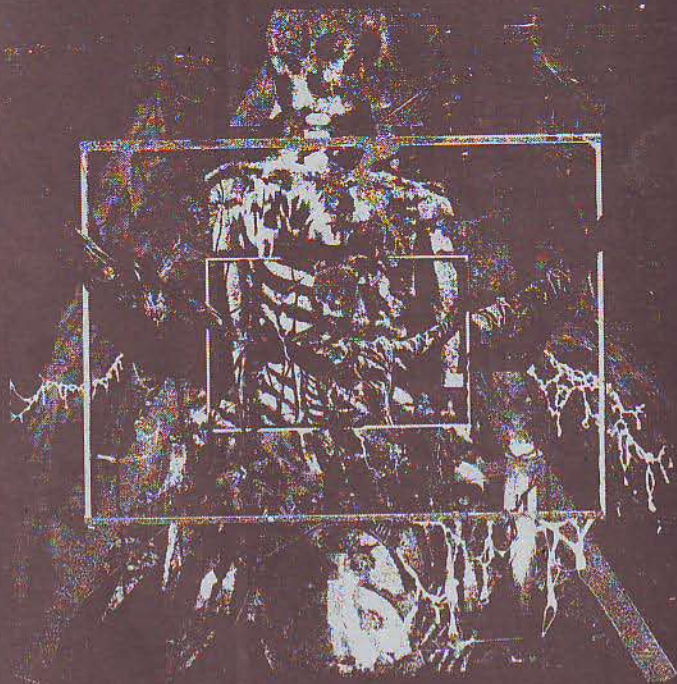


Oak Barrel Boys. Recently Gonzo joined MZRCDXVL and they recorded an LP. I won't bore everyone with all the shitty bands I've done, but I was in MK-Ultra from 1993-2000. That band means a lot to me because of all the memories, people I met and cities I got to visit that I never would've been able to visit. I'm stoked that Youth Attack was able to put out that double LP because it is fucking flawless, and I'm flattered that people still ask me about it all the time and remember us. Playing non-stop with Charles Bronson and Los Crudos, and later touring with Los Crudos, was a time I will never forget. Martin from Los Crudos really took care of us. He released our second 7 inch on Lengua Armada in '95 or '96 and in addition to whatever money we made on that tour, at each show Martin would give us extra cash from the Los Crudos money to help keep gas in our van. Martin did so much for Chicago hardcore/punk and I will never be able to repay his generosity. We did a reunion in 2009 and despite having no idea what to expect, we sold out the venue with 350+ people in attendance. It was magical, haha!

MRR: How do you feel the times have changed in your area, from the late '90s influential powerviolence band you were in, to the current grindviolence band that Sick/Tired is.

I do not consider MK-Ultra to be a powerviolence band. To me, we played fast hardcore. People like to toss that term around quite a bit simply because a band plays extremely fast. I think people use that term much more now than they did back then. The trends come and go and change of some sort will always happen. In the mid '90s we were so sick of "chugga-mosh" bullshit that we just wanted to play as fast as possible. I think that's similar to what caused the massive throwback to the early '80s hardcore trend that happened in 2000. People got sick of hearing the same bands play the same riffs 1000 miles an hour. Kids change. For example, the whole "mysterious" Void worship, B-side Black Flag thing that has been going on the last few years... MK-Ultra was heavily influenced by those bands, we just added a little Dropdead to the mix to make it even faster. That was our way of expanding on the style that we worshiped. If you look at both of the MK-Ultra 7 inches released roughly around '95, they had Void and Black Flag cover songs on them.

MRR: Tell me some about the Mark McCoy (of Charles Bronson) connection. I know he did the very basic Sick/Tired logo.
I have been good friends with Mark for probably eighteen years now. That's crazy to think about. Anyway, when we first started out I asked him



to design something for us because I am terrible at that sort of thing. A day later he sent me back like six different logos and we have been using them ever since. I love that guy.

MRR: Are there any outstanding/meaningful Sick/Tired lyrics you'd like to share?

"Death by crocodile," are the first words on our new LP. When I first heard Adam scream that, I was like "did you really just say that because it's fucking ridiculous." He explained it to me, a designer drug in Russia called Krokodil that makes the body basically rot away and the addict's skin becomes greenish and scaly, as blood vessels burst and the surrounding tissue dies. Adam's lyrics are interesting because they are not what they seem when you look at them. They might look straightforward when you are reading them, but they never mean what you think they do.

MRR: What is in store for the future? Where can we find your releases or contact you?

Like I mentioned, Sick/Tired are recording a new LP in July. When it comes out, we plan on touring a little. Not sure which direction just yet, but I'd like to hit up Boston and NYC. Sandro from RSR might do a 7" for us in 2013, but he is really backed up with new releases right now. I would really like to do a 7" on Painkiller to be honest. Such a sicklabel. Anyone can download most of our stuff for free on our Bandcamp or order it directly from the labels I mentioned previously. They only allow us 200 free downloads per month on the website so if you go to the site and it costs money, wait a week or so and it'll reset back to being free.

MRR: Final words?

We want to do a split release with Mindless from TX. Come on Will, make it happen on To Live A Lie. Contact: slavestatexx@yahoo.com, sick-tired.bandcamp.com.

